

Lived Poetics as a Contemplative Stance of Christian Witness: The Case from Australia for a World in Crisis

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Abstract

This paper evokes reflections on “lived poetics” as a contemplative stance of Christian witness during the recent pandemic in the context of multicultural Australia “Down Under.” Following an explanation of lived poetics, this paper articulates how deep *listening*, *imagination*, and *participation* are encompassed during periods of lockdown. By amplifying the author’s own and other Australian poetic voices, it seeks to demonstrate the power of lived poetics rooted in lived experience is both inspirational and transformative. It argues that this aesthetic epistemological path to make a beautiful and meaningful life is an effective contemplative stance of Christian witness in a broken world. It offers a new spiritual horizon of beauty that may save the world from decay and ashes, a new way of being and becoming fully alive.

Keywords

poetics, lived theology, listening, imagination, participation, Australia, pandemic(s)

Introduction

What does it mean to be “Christian” in the “new normal” as the world events of the coronavirus, Black Lives Matter, struggles between superpowers, and the Russian-Ukraine war take place in our turbulent times? If the primary call of Christians is to witness (Acts 1:8), what would it look like in a world plagued with crises? The

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creation is groaning in great pain and crying for its liberation (Rom 8:22). How do we find the pathways and embodiment of Christian witness?

This paper evokes reflections on lived poetics as a contemplative stance of Christian witness during the recent pandemic in the context of multicultural Australia “Down Under.” Following an explanation of lived poetics, this paper articulates how deep *listening*, *imagination* and *participation* are encompassed during periods of lockdown. Each section is coupled with and elaborated by the author’s own poetry, joined by other Australian poetic voices. By embracing the power of lived poetics rooted in lived experience, it seeks to demonstrate new ways of seeing and understanding the world that are both inspirational and transformative. It argues that this aesthetic epistemological path to make a beautiful and meaningful life is an effective contemplative stance of Christian witness in a broken world.

Lived Poetics

During the worldwide pandemic(s) of 2020–22, extensive lockdowns were imposed in many countries, yet unexpectedly we found from news reports that a violinist was playing solemn music in an empty city square; neighbors were singing songs to each other across their balconies; singers across cities, countries and continents in multiple languages over Zoom screens sang the hymn “*The Blessing*,” which went viral with more than 100 digitally stitched-together YouTube videos.¹ When the Russia-Ukraine war broke out in March 2022, the poem “Prayer” by Chinese poet Yu Xiuhua went viral and stirred up considerable public debate.² These acts, in the method that this paper coined as lived poetics, have given people hope and solidarity in the midst of gloom and isolation.

Lived poetics is a unique form of “lived theology”³ with poetic imagination. Lived theology, according to Marsh, “highlights the particularities of experience, narrates “lived life” with God, in its brilliance, depth, detail, and intensity, and affirms the wisdom and detail of these experiences as constitutive aspects of the theological enterprise.”⁴ It is “lived” because it is formed and shaped out of everyday lived experiences on a journey towards God, before one is immersed in a set of cognitive ideas and doctrines. “Poetics,” on the other hand, borrowed from Aristotle’s *poesis*, refers to “the process of making sense of the creation by creative and constructive practices driven by the desire to live and make a good life.”⁵ This human drive for meaning is aesthetically framed beyond poetry, extending to music, painting, and art in general. It is poetic because the nature of *imago Dei* is to intimately belong to and commune with the Creator by responding to the insistent calling to create and make something attractive and significant. God’s offer of self-communication, in Karl Rahner’s notion of a “supernatural existential,” is extended to every human being. Humans have the capacity to know God in an affective dimension through the beauty of creation.⁶ This *a priori* condition together with Charles Taylor’s *posteriori* reflection on human desire for “fullness”⁷ ground lived poetics as an epistemological path towards God.

Lived poetics is therefore the creative and aesthetic epistemology of lived human experience on a constant move in response to the persistent calling of God to make a

meaningful and beautiful life. It emphasizes the embodied, experiential, and affective dimension of poetic encounter rather than a detached intellectual endeavor, so that transformation may take place in the process of creativity and communication. It can be considered a contemplative stance as life's meanings and nature's beauty are reflected upon deeply. The contemplative immersion is an attempt to bypass the massive distortions hidden in the Western educational world, and to enter into an authentic connection with God and others by a grounding in what Willie Jennings calls "*erotic souls*."⁸ This creaturely belonging to and communion with the Creator is contemplated and expressed in poetry in dialogue with the social, economic, political, and environmental crises Australia experienced during the crises mentioned in this article. The essential issues of the collective lament, ethnicity, race, and virtual communications are considered through the acts of listening, imagining, and participating.

Listening

Listening is the first and foremost task of human lived poetics. This form of listening demands the full embodiment of attention to the divine, others, and self. The cultural premise of the Chinese etymology "Ting" (聽) is a vivid expression of "listening" that engages the five elements of the body (ears, eyes, mind, heart, and undivided attention) in a holistic way. Likewise, Aboriginal communities in Australia learned many centuries ago that one needs to listen not just to the verbal or body, but to the "deep water sounds," so one may "tap into that deep spring that is within us."⁹

There were two worldwide crises in 2020: Covid-19 and the escalation of racial injustice. As of February 21, 2023, Australia had over eleven million confirmed cases of coronavirus and over 19,000 deaths, even though a range of measures to prevent the spread of the virus were implemented.¹⁰ Even more significant than the health crisis was the prevalence of prolonged racial injustice. Following the tragic death of George Floyd (1973–2020), Australian indigenous people went to the streets and protested the long-term racial oppression where Aboriginals continue to die in custody. It is incomparable to those who compare home to "prison." It is reported that although forming only 2–3% of Australia's population, indigenous people occupied 28% of the prison population in 2019, and at least 437 Aboriginal people died in custody from 2008 to 2020.¹¹

Similar to the African "moaning" songs that express deep suffering, Australian indigenous poets speak of the loss of land and survival history with ironic overtones of Australian "humor." Alexis Wright, the Waanyi woman refers to January 26, Australia Day, as old Whitefella Day: ". . . there is an ant out there laboring in the dirt under the wings of a dead butterfly, taking it on a journey that seems to take forever, a journey as great as travelling around the world to the butterflies cemetery."¹² Samuel Wagan writes on the negation of violence against violence: he has "fallen into the snares of what the invader prides most of all . . . that is the ability to turn blood against blood."¹³ Ali Cobby Eckermann echoes, We "breathe life into the bodies of our ancestors . . . / in the future the petition will be everlasting / even when the language is changed."¹⁴ The Australian Muslim poet Omar Sakr reiterates this sentiment through his poem

“Masks Off”: “There is no poetic way to say millions have been killed . . . ,” bringing forth the irony of everyday human atrocities even before Covid-19 struck.¹⁵ These voices become louder in the face of the destruction of human kinship, offering a critical means through which to speak truth from the margins. I was inspired to write the following poem by confronting the violation of human voices.¹⁶

Voices

voices from our lungs
 have sound
 vibration
 colour
 and life

they
 laugh
 sing
 shout
 exclaim

sigh
 whine
 wail
 scream

play
 imitate
 surprise
 affirm

disapprove
 dismiss
 disgust
 disappoint

question
 scare
 hesitate
 annoy

yawn
 moan
 groan
 roar

whistle
 whisper
 wonder
 call

declare
 cheer
 adore
 bless

every note
 in high or low pitch
 up or down accent
 silence or noise
 composed into a melody
 in an ever-flowing river
 of life

until
 choked on the ground
 smothered by the mask
 crushed by Houston and Chengdu
 suffocated by the pandemics
 slaughtered in the home kitchen
 . . .
 and every moment since Eden

all we need
 is to
 BREATHE

in memory of George Floyd (1973–2020)

Following a detailed description of sounds and colors depicting the life of voices in the first ten stanzas, the violence of the eight-minute video clip about George Floyd is linked to a range of imaginative yet cutting terms in the eleventh stanza: the mask mandate; the shutting down of embassies in the US and China; the dying bodies in hospital beds; and the increasing domestic violence during the lockdowns. Writing from a Christian vantage point, this collective lament for the “virus” in the contemplative pauses can be traced back to the fall in Genesis 3. The poem weeps for the sacred breath of life and sacred gift of voice being brutally taken away. The emphasis in the capitalized verb “BREATHE” at the end shows that this is the very “breath” that God breathed into humanity and that gives them life. It is the last human cry in the midst of open, raw, and brutal violence.

In Chinese, the noun “breath” is translated as *Qi*, which represents the potency of life derived from heaven and earth within a person. It is the ontological life that produces Yin and Yang, spirit and soul.¹⁷ Māori people in New Zealand use the word *aroha* for love, meaning “pay attention to the breath” (*aro* is to pay attention, to take notice; *ha* is to breathe, to taste).¹⁸ Life cannot exist without love carried by breath.

These understandings enrich the biblical concept of “ruach” (Gen 2:7; cf. John 20:22, 2 Tim 3:16), which can be translated as “spirit,” “wind,” or “breath of life.” Jesus breathed on his disciples to empower them with the Holy Spirit (John 20:22). It was the same Spirit that filled the disciples with power to preach the gospel (Acts 2:2–4). Floyd’s last words: “I can’t breathe” summarize the reality of the pandemic environmentally, economically, and in health crises such that the vitality of the human spirit and the divine presence are violated. However, creation has never stopped breathing and constantly invites us to pay attention to her breath.

By listening attentively to the human cries for breath, lived poetics becomes a means of defiance and protest to confront social injustices and bear witness to the sacred life of every human being bestowed by God the Creator.

Imagining

Imagining is an essential element of lived poetics. Through the vehicles of sound, language, and metaphor, the imaginative is activated and cultivated, unveiling another world behind and beyond the world we see and touch. This “other world” is a new reality that is filled with deep mysteries of truth, beauty, and hope. In the prevailing presence of evil and violence, imagination opens a new way of seeing and understanding with the hope of *shalom*—flourishing life of all creation.

The pandemic brought the whole world into a collective life of unpredictability. No one could control the economy, the weather, or when a lockdown would happen next. Melbourne experienced the longest Covid-19 lockdown in the world commencing March 2020. The city of five million people spent a cumulative 262 days or nearly nine months under stay-home orders,¹⁹ driving many residents to leave the “most livable city in the world” for other parts of the country. Without regular routines and clear demarcations of rhythms, life became fragmented, leaving people experiencing the notion of “Blursday.” This collective season of *acedia* (Latin, meaning carelessness or neglect) commonly attributed to John Cassian (360–435 A.D.) as a “demon” and a “wearied or anxious heart” that causes feelings of listlessness with undirected anxiety and inability to concentrate for prayers and good work.²⁰ This sense of boredom and frustration filled the memory of many Melburnians for the two years of enforced lockdowns. Many experienced being “zoomed out” and found it hard to concentrate and follow conversations. Mental illness in the form of depression, suicide, and domestic violence escalated. The crisis agency Lifeline had a record number of calls reaching the highest daily number in its history, and the suicide rate continued to increase.²¹

Yet precisely in such a time of crisis, the imagination of the *acedia* life can lead one to go beyond the current reality of isolation and distress and enter a world of creativity, wonder, and hope through the contemplative stance of lived poetics, that beckons with the persistent call of God to make a beautiful life. Australian poets responded to the pandemic(s) creatively with their poetic voices to process their experiences, addressing the issues of isolation, anxiety, uncertainty, and grief with their particular imaginations.²² I was inspired to write the following poem during the second lockdown on a wintery night in 2020.²³

Walnut

sealed
sheltered
shielded
enclosed
in darkness
I am safe
inside
the rugged armour

confessing
 cleansing
 healing
 soothing
pausing
 waiting
 resting
 breathing
praying
 listening
 reflecting
 receiving
dreaming
 wondering
 creating
 brewing
generating
 shaping
 anticipating
 trusting

this hard shell
keeps away
corroding air
intrusive worms
wintery rain
greedy cockatoos
this womb
nurtures
my soft flesh

till I am ready
to be given away

afresh
to the world
from the cracked crust

Instead of treating stay-at-home orders as imprisonment as protested by some people, this place of confinement can be the very space for cleansing, waiting, receiving, creating, and trusting expressed in the five stanzas in the middle of the poem. With indents in each line of these stanzas, the sequential and detailed process is simultaneously articulated with the present tense of the verbs, for readers to mull and chew slowly in a contemplative stance. The shelter of a home illuminates the shield of God that protects one from evil and destruction. Like the hazelnut that Julian of Norwich (1343–c.1416) held, the walnut (or physical home), though small, is significant and provides a physically protected space for healing, rest, reflection, and creativity. Physical activities such as exercise, cooking, gardening, drawing, and writing help to keep life in a rhythm and find refreshment every day. Contemplative prayers slow down the fast pace of life, enabling one to appreciate the small everyday gifts like smelling the roses, starting a vegetable garden, hugging animals, taking a slow walk, connecting with friends over Zoom, and spending more time with families. The embodied prayers free one from the bondage of performance, productivity, and perfectionism to enjoy spontaneous activities for refreshment, creativity, and growth.

Indeed, it is not necessary to climb to the mountaintop to experience signs and wonders: a person just needs to look out of the window to find the wonder of the world. The famous motto of Thérèse of Lisieux (1873–1897) “to do very little things with great love” is expressed here:

“I looked at the flowers in God’s garden and I saw great big lilies and beautiful roses, and I knew I could never be one of those. But I looked over in the corner and there was a little violet that nobody would notice. That’s me. That’s what God wants me to be.”²⁴

If not for the lockdowns, many things around us may never have been noticed or appreciated as God’s gifts to his own creation. This era is an invitation to cultivate a prayerful and grateful heart to the giver of every good gift with the wings of imagination led by the Spirit. Simplicity, rest, and freedom can be discovered in the imaginative realm of lived poetics. It is from there hope arises in the horizon of everyday life hidden in Christ. Even in the silence of God—the season of unknown—can we echo with Julian of Norwich during the bubonic plague: “It is true that sin is [the] cause of all these sufferings, but all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manners of things shall be well”?²⁵ The imagination of lived poetics sabotages humans’ proclivity for mastery, unmoors us from predictability, and opens up new possibilities for future connectivity.

By attending to the untamed imagination led by the Spirit, lived poetics becomes a way to resist sin and evil and bear witness to the persistent call of God to dream, create, and hope for a beautiful life without bypassing the inevitable trauma of life.

Participating

Participation in the community of humans and nonhumans is an indispensable part of lived poetics. The common life as “we”—humans who live *with* each other and the creation—makes the beautiful life that God calls us to pursue together in the world. Lived poetics resists anthropocentrism, tribalism, and nationalism, offering instead wide-open connectedness and loving care with all creaturely beings. It is in participation with other human fellows and creatures that the building of an ecosystem of community may be possible, both biologically and socially.

During the pandemic, the Australian government utilized the concept of “mateship” to promote “we are all in this together” and encouraged caregiving to the vulnerable. Indeed, Australia, “the lucky country,” already had the phenomenon of mateship in public discourse as a defining characteristic of Australian cultural identity. It appeared in the writings of Henry Lawson (1867–1922) and Banjo Paterson (1864–1941), the best-known Australian bush poets and writers, as one of the key traditional qualities of the Australian bushman in support of others in time of hardship. Australia is described as “the Great Lone Land of magnificent distances and bright heat; the land of Self-reliance, and Never-give-in, and Help-your-mate.”²⁶ Solidarity with comrades with resilience and reliance is appreciated and valued in the face of common adversity. It is often associated with the memory of the ANZAC experience of the First World War, where Australian and New Zealand soldiers formed part of the allied expedition to set out to capture the Gallipoli peninsula on April 25, 1915.

However, this concept of mateship did not seem to match with reality as there was undoubtable rising racism and negligence of elderly citizens in nursing homes during the pandemic. Since the naming of “the Chinese virus” by certain politicians, many racist incidents targeting anyone with an Asian appearance happened across the country. Likewise, Covid-19 spread severely in nursing homes, leaving many vulnerable elderly people on their death beds dying alone. George M. Crombie reflects on the paradoxical nature of the term mateship: “It has connotations of ‘brotherhood’ and ‘fellowship’ that are compatible with the gospel. But it also links closely with the tragic element within culture, and in a flight from intimacy under the guise of intimacy it can lead to self-alienation.”²⁷ The guise of intimacy was exposed more vividly during the crises in that the vulnerable members of the community such as Asians, the elderly, and indigenous people were bullied or neglected. The gospel challenges the Australian culture of mateship and asks the question, “Who is my mate?”

Australian poets questioned this and found a way to connect with others through lived poetics during a time of social distancing and isolation. For example, Omar Sakr claims, “I turn to poetry to be in communion, to add other voices to the song of my witnessing, my resistance, my pain, and joy. To go from being alone to being in a chorus.”²⁸ It is during this difficult time that the questions of human identity and dignity were raised and explored in my poems “Who am I?” It plumbs the depth of who I am / we are as God’s “Beloved”: “let the Beloved / be loved / let who I am / be enfolded

in I AM.”²⁹ Human identity grounded in the Triune God is intrinsically connected with the participation in communities even via virtual communication used during the Covid season. I attended a weekly one-hour silent waiting with the Australian Network of Spiritual Direction. In the immersion of the silence, I recorded the experience in the following poem.³⁰

A Collective Silent Space

after the ocean wave of silence
 colourful shells on the sand
 form these musical lines:

entering the fire
 dancing in the heart of flames
 beating the drum with rhythms
 immersed in the liquid love of the Spirit
 soaring above the clouds
 the shelter of each other where we live
 infilling
 detaching
 uplifting
 outworking

harness of God
 energy of love
 healing of all creation
 sacred ground of truth
 and mystery

let yeast permeate the dough of our reality
 enliven our hearts to reach out
 Christ takes shape among us
 a new way of being
 a unified space
 enfolding each other in the Presence
 sheer blessings

birds calling
 ripples on a pond
 go in peace
 go with justice
 go in love

This is a community in silence held by womb-like love, as we enter into the presence where the flames, rhythms, and Spirit are moving. Dancing in the heart of flames is precisely where we find freedom, healing, and the mystery of love. In the enfolding love of one another, we become shelters for each other. Our connectedness with the divine and each other goes beyond a Zoom window and reaches into the depth of our hearts through our humanity centered in Christ. This sacred place is a portrait of what Thomas Keating describes: “The silence of the Creator is thunderous / Drowning out everything else / and hiding in endless creativity.”³¹ Here God is living, moving, and dancing in relationships amongst people. It is where life flows freely to all lives in truth, goodness, and beauty in community.

The participation with the creation through lived poetics goes beyond humans, reaching animals, plants, and lands of the whole creation. During the pandemic, global warming, pollution, and natural disasters continued mercilessly ravaging the creation. Australia had its hottest day ever, reaching the average maximum temperature of 41.9 Centigrade—only one day after the previous record on December 19, 2019.³² The bushfires in the “Black Summer” of 2020 burnt an estimated 18.6 million hectares, 5,900 buildings, and killed at least thirty-four human beings. Studies show that three billion animals were killed or displaced, and some species were driven to extinction.³³ In the following summer, the Australian East Coast experienced the worst floods in living memory, claiming at least seventeen lives and sweeping away hundreds of livestock and properties in the so-called “once in 1,000 years” catastrophic weather.³⁴ The creation cries out in rage and emphatically calls for our urgent care.

Christian theology and missiology hold that humanity is created to “be with”—for relationships with the earth, other creatures, and God. The earth is the home of humanity, whose origin and destiny are inextricably bound up with that of the earth.³⁵ The non-human creatures of the earth, though differentiated, are mutually interdependent, echoing their relationships with one another. They teach humanity the wisdom of seasons and cycles, birth and growth, patience and hope. They also ask for reverence and respect so the goodness and beauty of God can be revealed. When the relationship with the earth is violated, she responds in turmoil and rage.

During this time, I wrote a series of poems in relation to the care of creation, as if we are one in the creaturely belonging. The poem “Beauty and the Beast” portrays an intimate and fun relationship between me and my dog during the lockdowns.³⁶ With the voice of a personified dog, the poem contemplates a fairy tale where humans and animals interact with liveliness and fondness when stay-at-home orders were in place. The poem “A Photo Collage” paints a garden: “Spring flowers in myriad colours and shapes / all put up their hands / leaping in the wind / enthusiastically / demanding to have their photos taken”. The following bilingual poem was performed at the 15th International Association for Mission Studies (IAMS) Sydney Assembly 2022, with curated moving images and music.³⁷

Where are you going?

to the waterfall
to pray with the pine
gushing from the depth of the earth

to the wild field
to pick the flowers
putting them on my head as a bride

to the arctic
to touch the lights
fingers brushing through the night

to the desert
to dance between musical scores
of sand waves bleeding in the rhythm of a didgeridoo

to the ocean
to watch thousands of glittering gold
on liquid silk melting away

to the mountain top
to blow the resounding horn
echoing in the valley of souls

Will you return?

When the kookaburras" laughter
and the roaring sound of heaven are joined
by thousands of acclamations
I will return

Despite catastrophic disasters, the poem invites all to participate in *missio Dei* in communion with the Creator and the creation. It begins with an everyday question a mother might ask a child who is about to leave home, echoing a beckoning call from the Creator to humanity since Eden (cf. Gen 3:9). The relentless "to" somewhere (waterfall, wild field, arctic, desert, ocean, mountain top) carries the eschatological hope where God is always on the move towards the fullness of time for the whole of creation. The motif with distinctive Australian characteristics (a didgeridoo, a red "bleeding" desert, kookaburras" laughter) expresses the contextual beauty of the scenery. The last paragraph speaks of the climax of the movement where heaven and earth celebrate with "thousands of acclamations" in the welcoming of the Parousia of Christ (see Ephesians 1:10). The collective "I" leaving home is joined with the great "I AM"

in the final union. This too adorns the moving *missio Dei* with the beauty of a new rhythm and imagery thus enriching theological/missiological imagination for human longings and hope.³⁸ Lived poetics joins the chorus of the whole creation, calling for the return of humanity to the garden in perfect harmony and fellowship with God and the creaturely beings.

By participating in building a life-giving ecosystem of community with both humans and non-humans, lived poetics joins the healing movement of God and bears witness to life together with a Triune God who commits to the *shalom* of the world.

Conclusion

Can beauty save the world? Fyodor Dostoyevsky is convinced that truth is never separated from good and beauty. Alongside the whole creation that has been groaning in the pains of childbirth, we are groaning inwardly together with the Spirit (Romans 8:23, 26). By listening attentively to the heart cries of this day and age, lived poetics gives voices to the voiceless and offers an audacity of defiance and protest to a polarized culture. By imagining the unseen world led by the Spirit vertically, lived poetics becomes a creative epistemological path to unveil a new reality of beauty and hope. By participating in the new creation horizontally, lived poetics has the power to connect deeply with ourselves, others, and the creaturely beings in the world. In a time of world-wide pandemic(s), lived poetics bears witness to the human dignity and sacredness bestowed by the Creator, to the persistent call to make a beautiful and meaningful life, to human responsibility to co-labor with God in communities with the eschatological hope for the new creation. As such, its embodied and living form, bound-up with Christ, offers a new path of solidarity with the vulnerable, and compassion for human flourishing in the boundlessness of God.

Not everyone should be a poet, but everyone can live a poetic life—a life that contemplates the beauty, truth, and goodness of God, especially in a world plagued with crises. Christians can bear prophetic witness to what God has created and is still creating through lived poetics. It opens up a new spiritual horizon of beauty that may indeed save the world from decay and ashes, a new way of being and becoming fully alive.

Notes

1. One of the poetry anthologies is Ikechukwu Otuu Egbuta and Nnenna Vivien Chukwu, eds., *World On The Brinks—An Anthology of Covid-19 Pandemic* (Umuahia: Cityway Book Ventures, 2020); see also its academic reflection in Isidore Diala, “Preliminary Notes on Topicality and Recent Pandemic Poetry,” *Tydskrif vir letterkunde* 59, no. 3 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.17159/tl.v59i3.12061>. However, none of the poems in the anthology include those in Australian settings.
2. Xiaokui Li, “Di’er Zhanchang? Zhongguo Shiren Fanzhan Shige Zao Weigong” Second Battlefield? Chinese Poets under Siege for Anti-war Poetry, *Vision Times*, March 4, 2022, accessed February 24, 2023, <https://www.secretchina.com/news/gb/2022/03/04/999534.html>.

3. There are waves of studies of “lived theology” or “ordinary theology/religion” in recent years, notably Charles Marsh, Peter Slade, and Sarah Azaransky, eds., *Lived Theology: New Perspectives on Method, Style, and Pedagogy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Jeff Astley, *Ordinary Theology: Looking, Listening, and Learning in Theology, Explorations in Practical, Pastoral and Empirical Theology*, (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002). While most of the research employs empirical methodology, few addresses how literature can be a lens to understand the theology or spirituality of everyday people. Hence this project provides a unique form of “lived theology”—“lived poetics.”
4. Marsh, Slade, and Azaransky, eds., *Lived Theology: New Perspectives on Method, Style, and Pedagogy* 10; cf. Jürgen Moltmann and Margaret Kohl, *The Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 183.
5. William Dyrness, *The Facts on the Ground: A Wisdom Theology of Culture* (Eugene OR: Cascade Books, 2021), 35, note 6; William A. Dyrness, *Poetic Theology: God and the Poetics of Everyday Life* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011).
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12. Alexis Wright, “Hey, Ancestor!” *The Guardian*, January 25, 2018, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/26/alexis-wright-hey-ancestor>.
13. Alison Whittaker, *Fire Front: First Nations Poetry and Power Today* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2020); see also Alison Whittaker, “First Nations People have Faced Moments like this Before. We can Learn from the Poems that Sprang from Them,” *The Guardian*, 23 April 2020, accessed February 15, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/apr/24/first-nations-people-have-faced-moments-like-this-before-we-can-learn-from-the-poems-that-sprung-from-them>.
14. Alison Whittaker, *Fire Front: First Nations Poetry and Power Today*; see also Whittaker, “First Nations People have Faced Moments like this Before. We can Learn from the Poems that Sprang from Them.”
15. Kelly Burke, “Omar Sakr, Yassmin Abdel-Magied and Evelyn Araluen—On Poetry in the Pandemic” *The Guardian*, 13 Aug 2021, accessed February 21, 2023, <https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/aug/14/omar-sakr-yassmin-abdel-magied-and-evelyn-araluen-on-poetry-in-the-pandemic>.
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